

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02  
SS-15 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 USIA-06  
PA-01 /085 W  
-----071847 011348Z /46

R 010641Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6816  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 01460

E.O.11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, GE, GW, UR  
SUBJECT: APPARENT SOVIET INTEREST IN DIRECT DISCUSSIONS  
WITH FRG ON FRG-GDR RELATIONS

REF: BONN 3067

1. IN FEB 27 CONVERSATION WITH DCM, FRG PERMREP CHIEF  
GAUS INDICATED THAT THE SOVIETS ARE MAKING GREATER EFFORTS  
IN BONN TO LEARN ABOUT FRG-GDR RELATIONS (REFTEL).  
WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC ABOUT THE FALIN-SPANGENBERG  
EFFORT, GAUS SAID THAT, WITHIN THE PAST TWO MONTHS, OLD  
SOVIET EMBASSY CONTACTS HAD SOUGHT HIM OUT WHILE HE WAS  
ON CONSULTATIONS IN BONN, IN PART TO DISCUSS THE SPIEGEL  
MANIFESTO, BUT ALSO TO DISCUSS FRG-GDR RELATIONS.

2. GAUS COMMENTED ON A MEETING HE HAD HAD FEB. 21 WITH  
ABRASSIMOV, AT THE LATTER'S INITIATIVE.  
ACCORDING TO GAUS, HE GETS TOGETHER WITH ABRASSIMOV 3-4  
TIMES A YEAR FOR SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS. AT THE FEB. 21  
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MEETING, GAUS SAID, ABRASSIMOV TOOK THE FRG TO TASK FOR  
NOT BEING WILLING TO DISCUSS "PRINCIPLE PROBLEMS"  
BETWEEN THE FRG AND GDR, E.G. CITIZENSHIP AND THE BORDERS.  
IN ABRASSIMOV'S VIEW, THE FRG ALWAYS EXPECTS THE GDR TO  
MAKE MORE CONCESSIONS THAN THE FRG ON PROBLEMS AND  
ISSUES UNDER DISCUSSION. ABRASSIMOV WENT ON TO ASSERT,  
ACCORDING TO GAUS, THAT THE FRG AND GDR MIGHT RUN OUT OF

THE "CONSTRUCTION RAW MATERIALS" OF THEIR RELATIONS IF THIS CONTINUED TO BE THE TREND AND IF THE FRG WERE NOT WILLING TO DISCUSS "BASIC PROBLEMS". GAUS SAID THAT WHAT ABRASSIMOV MEANT WAS THAT MANY OF THE ISSUES THAT WERE ON THE TABLE FOR BILATERAL FRG-GDR DISCUSSION AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS HAD BEEN MORE OR LESS RESOLVED, AND THAT IF THE FRG EXPECTED EAST BERLIN TO BE ACCOMMODATING ON NEW SMALL MATTERS, THEN BONN WOULD HAVE TO SHOW A MORE FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE ON BASIC PROBLEMS. GAUS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT BONN COULD NOT BE MORE ACCOMMODATING, PARTICULARLY, THIS YEAR, BUT THAT IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT SOMEHOW TO APPEAR MORE FLEXIBLE.

3. GAUS SAID THAT ABRASSIMOV HAD ONLY INDIRECTLY EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT FRG-GDR RELATIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, GAUS INDICATED OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN EAST BERLIN HAVE BEEN MORE ACTIVE IN THIS REGARD. IT IS GAUS' VIEW THAT THE SOVIETS ARE EXHIBITING INCREASING CONCERN OVER THE STATE OF FRGGDR RELATIONS. HE IS NOT CERTAIN WHETHER THIS IS BECAUSE (1) THE EAST GERMANS ARE NOT KEEPING THE SOVIETS ADEQUATELY INFORMED OR (2) WHETHER THIS IS MOSCOW'S WAY OF SIGNALLING TO BONN THAT FRG POLICY TOWARD THE GDR SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED FIRST TO MOSCOW. IN ANY EVENT, HE IS CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE SOVIET OVER-CONFIDENTIAL

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REACTION TO EVENTS IN THE GDR WHICH, BECAUSE THEY MEY NOT BE ADEQUATELY INFORMED, MIGHT LOOK LIKE THE REGIME HERE IS LOSING CONTROL OVER DEVELOPMENTS. AT THE SAME TIME, GAUS STRESSED HE DOES NOT SEE ANY SIGNS OF SERIOUS UNREST IN THE GDR.

4. ON A SPECIFIC ASPECT OF FRG-GDR RELATIONS, GAUS NOTED THAT BORDER COMMISSION EXPERTS ARE NOW MEETING AGAIN AND THAT A DELEGATION-LEVEL MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE SHORTLY. HE SAID THAT BONN'S POSITION NOW IS THAT IT WOULD BE PREPARED TO HAVE THE CHIEF OF ITS DELEGATION SIGN A "PROTOCOL" ON DELIMITING THE BORDERS ON BEHALF OF THE FRG GOVERNMENT IF THE EAST GERMANS WERE WILLING TO SET ASIDE THE ELBE RIVER PROBLEM, AND ASSUMING OTHER REMAINING TECHNICAL ISSUES ARE RESOLVED. ACCORDING TO GAUS, THIS WAS A MODIFICATION OF BONN'S ORIGINAL POSITION OF HAVING THE CHIEF OF ITS DELEGATION MERELY SIGN A DOCUMENT THAT WOULD HAVE NO GOVERNMENT-LEVEL WEIGHT, BUT NOT QUITE WHAT EAST BERLIN WANTS, I.E., A FULL-FLEDGED BILATERAL GOVERNMENT-LEVEL AGREEMENT. GAUS TENDED TO DOUBT WHETHER THE EAST GERMANS WOULD BE WILLING TO SET ASIDE THE ELBE RIVER QUESTION IN EXCHANGE FOR A

"PROTOCOL" SIGNED ON BEHALF OF GOVERNMENTS, AND IN THIS  
SENSE HE WAS MORE PESSIMISTIC THAN EARLIER FRG PERMREP  
EXPECTATIONS THAT THE BORDER COMMISSION COULD WRAP ITS  
WORK UP BY THIS SUMMER. BOLEN

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FOREIGN RELATIONS, SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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